

CHAPTER THREE

EMERGENCY VEHICLE DRIVING AND POLICY

Chapter 3

Emergency Vehicle Driving and Policy

When developing an emergency vehicle driver training program, consideration must be given to three important factors—developing and implementing policies that describe and regulate the training process, the emergency vehicle operation policies of the agency that provides the training, and the needs of the agencies that will be the clients of the training, if the same training program serves multiple agencies.

Because of the need to have policies that regulate the training itself, there is a need to familiarize the students with these policies at the beginning of the program. In some cases the students will also need to be trained or refreshed on the policies of the agencies that they represent or will work for, or at the very least, the techniques and methods taught must not violate the policy of one or more of the agencies served by the training program. Those who conduct the training should also be consulted whenever practicable, in the process of drafting the agency's emergency vehicle operations policies. These trainers may be in the best position to evaluate the capabilities of the officers and the equipment that will be used to implement whatever policies are developed. In addition, on-going feedback from officers and supervisors from the street perspective will assist in keeping training practices and policies current and practical.

Regulation Of Training Programs

L Display overhead # 1

Policies that regulate the training itself should cover, at a minimum, the following topical areas:

1. Criteria for development and approval of the training program, including but not limited to job task analyses, learning goals and performance objectives, and written and performance-based testing procedures.
2. Procedures for periodic review and updating of the curriculum.
3. Procedures for the training and approval of instructors in the program.
4. Procedures to follow when a student fails the program, including any procedures for review and retesting and any restrictions on the student's activities pending retesting.

5. Procedures for purchasing and equipping of law enforcement emergency training vehicles and the purchase of other relevant equipment. Whenever possible, training vehicles should be equipped as similarly as possible to the actual fleet vehicles that the students will be driving on the job.
6. Procedures regarding the use of simulation technology where available to supplement, but not replace, hands-on skills training with actual law enforcement vehicles.
7. Safety procedures and precautions to be observed including vehicle inspections.
8. Student and instructor safety equipment, approval of course modifications, and student and instructor behavior.
9. Requirements for basic and periodic ongoing law enforcement emergency vehicle operations (in-service) training.

Agency Vehicle Operation Policies

Each law enforcement agency should develop and adopt policies and procedures to be followed by its members regarding routine driving of agency vehicles, and the operation of emergency vehicles both in response to urgent radio dispatches and in vehicular pursuit and roadblock situations. In the development of new policies, standards of the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA) should always be consulted so that accredited agencies remain in compliance and non-accredited agencies will find it easier to achieve compliance should they seek accreditation in the future. Administrators, supervisors, department legal counsel, insurance risk managers, line officers and trainers should all be invited to give input whenever these high-liability policies are developed or revised.

It is insufficient to simply develop and pass a policy - the policy is of no value unless the agency's employees are familiar with it and understand it, and the administration enforces it. Each agency should have a methodology for periodic review of the policies that are in effect, and for dissemination of the policies and revisions to all affected employees, as well as training and periodic refresher training in these policies. Systems should also be in place to ensure compliance through appropriate supervisory oversight. Should discipline be necessary in policy compliance issues, it must be carried out quickly or run the risk of custom and practice becoming the prevailing behavior of line officers.

Policies should also provide for review of each collision of a law enforcement vehicle by a review board or other means, to determine if the collision was preventable or non-preventable, and whether agency policy was being followed by the operator of the emergency vehicle. The reviewing body or party should make recommendations to management as to the need for remedial training or

discipline, and advise management as to any deficiencies that become apparent in policy and procedures, training programs or vehicle equipment as a result of this review process.

Policies Regulating Routine Driving

L Display overhead # 2

Policies that regulate routine driving should include at a minimum the following topical areas:

1. Pre-shift vehicle inspection, reporting and repair of vehicle damage and defects.
2. Requiring all employees to drive with courtesy and obey all traffic laws, setting an example for the public.
3. Restricting the use of departmental vehicles to official purposes or, in the alternative, regulating the use of any "take-home vehicle" programs.
 - a. Mandating the use of seat belts.
 - b. Transportation of prisoners in agency vehicles.
 - c. Mandating initial and periodic refresher courses in general defensive driving.
 - d. Establishing a process for the investigation and after-action critique of all collisions involving agency vehicles to determine that agency policies were not violated, and to detect and provide remedial training and, where necessary, disciplinary correction for officers who have preventable collisions with agency vehicles.

Policies Regarding Emergency Runs

L Display overhead # 3

Emergency runs are equally as dangerous as pursuits, although they have historically not received as much adverse publicity. Personnel who drive emergency response vehicles must be trained to continually evaluate the situation when on an emergency run, so as to make the correct judgments as to whether the totality of the circumstances warrants initiating or continuing an emergency run, or if a response at reduced speeds would be the wiser course of action. Supervisors and dispatchers must receive training in the appropriate assignment of coded responses for these runs. The overriding consideration must be the sobering fact that the responding officer is of no value at the scene if he or

she is delayed or worse by a collision while en route, and in fact the resources diverted to handle such a collision may further reduce the availability of units to handle the original call.

Escorts of other emergency and civilian vehicles in emergency situations are also fraught with danger. Frequently when one emergency vehicle escorts another through an intersection, other motorists will assume that the way is clear when the first emergency vehicle has passed, and pull out in front of the unanticipated second vehicle. Unless the primary emergency response vehicle does not know the way to the scene, there is no need for a law enforcement escort if it is equipped with proper emergency warning devices. Unless absolute life and death situations dictate otherwise, private vehicles should not receive emergency escorts to medical facilities. The sick or injured persons should be transferred to an ambulance, or as a last resort, transported in a law enforcement vehicle.

Training of drivers of emergency vehicles who respond to emergency 911 calls should also include the proper use of emergency warning devices, safety precautions to follow when multiple emergency vehicles are responding to the same event, and any exceptions to the rules of the road granted to emergency vehicles under the traffic codes of the particular jurisdiction. Close examination and a clear understanding of the applicable state and local laws covering emergency vehicle operations is a critical component to training and policy initiatives.

Through training, policy and supervisory oversight, agency managers and supervisors must ensure that law enforcement emergency vehicles are driven within the parameters of policy and applicable emergency exceptions to the vehicle code, and with due regard for the safety of all.

Each law enforcement agency should develop and implement protocols to ensure that its vehicles are well-maintained through regular preventive maintenance programs, prompt reporting and repair of defects, and set replacement schedules that minimize the use of patrol vehicles with excessive mileage. Inspection procedures should also be initiated immediately following involvement in any pursuit or in those circumstances involving curb strikes or obvious mechanical failure.

Policies Regulating Vehicular Pursuits

L Display overhead # 4

Vehicular pursuit of fleeing suspects presents a danger to the lives of the public as well as the officers and suspects who are involved in the pursuit.

The National Commission on Law Enforcement Emergency Vehicle Operations, convened by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), in 1995, pointed out that there is no reliable nationwide data base that tells us how many pursuits occur each year, where they are initiated, or the end result. Studies in some jurisdictions, including Florida, Michigan and California, indicate that the majority of pursuits are initiated for routine motor vehicle code violations, and that in some jurisdictions as many as 25% of pursuits end in crashes.

However this data expresses only half of the equation. The other half is what might happen if the pursuit had never been initiated. Many times, what the officer only believed was a minor motor vehicle violation leads to the discovery of a serious crime and a felony arrest. In California, where all pursuits by state, local and county agencies must be reported to the California Highway Patrol, data that they have gathered indicates that it is infrequent that the drivers of pursued vehicles are charged only with a traffic infraction, and that when felony charges are made, they most often involve something other than eluding pursuit. Anecdotal evidence from law enforcement agencies nationwide also indicates that many persons who have committed serious crimes, from serial killers such as the late Ted Bundy to the infamous Oklahoma City bomber, Timothy McVeigh, have been stopped as the result of a routine traffic offense.

Therefore, while it might be practical for a few agencies to ban vehicular pursuits or to restrict them to known felony offenses only, such a policy would be impractical in many other jurisdictions. It is more feasible in most agencies to adopt policies that require a balancing of the risks involved on a fluid, case-by-case basis, of initiating or continuing a pursuit versus the probable results if the suspect is not apprehended. The results of a strict "no-chase" policy might send a clear signal to lawbreakers that they could both violate the traffic codes and commit crimes with little fear of being caught, by simply refusing to stop for an officer.

Types of Vehicular Pursuits

Vehicular pursuits range from those involving suspects driving slowly and cautiously but refusing to stop, to individuals driving at high speeds with total disregard for lives and property. In some pursuits, an officer may be able to identify the driver, terminate the chase and apprehend the driver later on a warrant. Other pursuits may involve an unknown person driving a stolen vehicle. Laws and ordinances that hold the registered owner responsible are of no value if the vehicle is stolen or operated by a wanted fugitive.

Sometimes, the pursuing officer can back off and follow at a lower speed, hoping the suspect will back off as well. Often, however, the suspect will continue to drive dangerously unless apprehended. Much depends on the good judgment and common sense of the pursuing officer, the supervisor, and the radio dispatcher, as well as the totality of the circumstances. For this reason, it is difficult to anticipate and codify in a policy all the possible situations an officer will encounter.

Supervisory control of a pursuit enables a third party who is not emotionally involved to guard against the "pursuit fixation" that may cause pursuing officers to throw caution to the winds in the excitement of the moment. However, some rural agencies, state police and highway patrol officers may not have a readily available supervisor to consult, and will be required to oversee their own pursuits.

If the suspect attempts to escape from a violent felony or is likely to cause death or serious injury unless immediately apprehended, forcible stopping techniques such as a roadblock or deliberate physical contact between the law enforcement vehicle and the suspect vehicle may be legally justified. Nevertheless, many of these tactics require in-depth training to perform properly and the risk of injury to an officer, a suspect or an innocent third party is such that they are best employed only under the most exigent of circumstances. The cross reference to a law enforcement agency's use of deadly force/deadly force policy is advisable as officers justify a life-threatening situation that warrants immediate intervention.

In light of these factors, law enforcement agencies have taken a variety of approaches to vehicular pursuits, ranging from an absolute ban to allowing wide officer discretion, depending on local laws, geographic and traffic conditions, availability of backup, field supervision, pursuit termination devices, and departmental philosophies. Once the policy is formulated, it becomes the trainer's obligation to explain it to the affected personnel.

The IACP Sample Pursuit Policy

In October 1996, the International Association of Chiefs of Police passed a resolution regarding vehicular pursuit and enacted a sample policy which appears at the end of this chapter. Drafted by the Association's Highway Safety Advisory Committee, the new policy replaced two separate IACP policies, one that had appeared in the Manual of Police Traffic Service Policies and Procedures published by IACP in 1968, and one circulated by the IACP Policy Center, along with a concepts and issues paper on pursuit, that did not constitute official IACP policy.

After being tasked by the IACP Board of Officers with developing a new policy, the Highway Safety Advisory Committee concluded that it was impractical to ask law enforcement agencies worldwide, or even in the United States, to adopt a single, standardized policy on law enforcement pursuits. The Committee felt there were a number of issues that should be addressed by any pursuit policy, and sought to isolate and define those issues. It was therefore recommended that law enforcement agencies develop, adopt and enforce formal written directives tailored to the needs of each individual jurisdiction, with particular emphasis on public safety concerns, that set forth the procedures to be used by officers for initiating, continuing and ending vehicular pursuits. These directives, IACP recommended, should also address the training of the agency's officers, supervisors and communications personnel on pursuit-related issues.

The IACP sample policy was based on the aforementioned recommendations of the National Commission on Law Enforcement Emergency Vehicle Operations, and was necessarily generic in nature, with individual agencies encouraged to deviate from it or adopt more stringent policies based on individual conditions and needs.

Pursuit Justification

Recognizing that there are times when the apprehension of a fleeing suspect may be necessary to avert further tragedy, and that there have been instances where dangerous criminals have been apprehended as the result of a traffic stop, and that interstate highways have become major "pipelines" for the distribution of illicit drugs and drug couriers are frequently apprehended in traffic stops, the IACP avoided advocating either a flat prohibition on pursuits, or a "felony only" policy. However, they also recognized that local conditions in some jurisdictions might make such a policy feasible or necessary.

Pursuit Training Requirements

Before operating a law enforcement emergency vehicle in pursuit situations, law enforcement officers should be trained to balance the need for immediate apprehension of a violator against the potential risks and hazards of a chase. Before using forcible tactics such as stationary or rolling roadblocks, ramming, and other collision techniques, or the use of spike strips, officers should be thoroughly familiar with the agency's use-of-force policy and trained in any tactic that will be attempted.

Appropriate training should be provided at the law enforcement academy or law enforcement agency in pursuit policies as well as tactics before emergency vehicle operators are assigned to any position within the agency that might necessitate pursuit or tactical driving. Periodic re-training (in-service) should be provided on the department's use-of-force policy and its relationship to pursuit operations, procedural changes and legal updates.

Pursuit Policy Contents

The IACP has recommended that each law enforcement agency that operates emergency vehicles adopt formal, written directives tailored to their unique needs and circumstances, and emphasizing public safety concerns. It is recommended that these directives set forth the procedures for initiating, continuing, ending, reporting and reviewing vehicular pursuits and the training of its officers, supervisors and communications personnel in pursuit-related issues. Responsibilities for participating, reporting and evaluating pursuits should be clearly defined for each person involved.

The IACP has also recommended that each law enforcement agency establish a method for critiquing officer, supervisor, communications and equipment involvement in a pursuit to identify areas of policy, training and equipment deficiencies, and/or policy violations.

Developing Defensible Pursuit Policies

What follows are 13 Components of a Defensible Pursuit Policy, that could be used as guidelines for developing a defensible pursuit policy. Each has an explanation of what should be covered in that particular section. The components need not necessarily appear under these headings, but the concepts should be included.

1. **Mission Statement:** The mission of the police is to “protect lives.” This section serves not only to remind officers of their ultimate responsibility, but as well “sets the tone” from a liability standpoint.
2. **Rationale:** What is the purpose of pursuing? Generally this section will recognize that the purpose is to apprehend suspects who will be brought to trial. The purpose is not to engage in a contest with the suspect. The section should focus on the need to immediately apprehend, balanced against the danger to the public and availability of alternatives to pursuit.
3. **Definitions:** Officers must communicate with a common vocabulary. Perhaps most critical is the definition of “pursuit.” All critical terms must be defined clearly.
4. **Initiation and Termination Factors:** The purpose of policy is to define and circumscribe officer discretion. The most important aspects of discretion concern when to allow or prohibit vehicle pursuit, and when to require termination. This section should reinforce the fact that termination of the vehicle pursuit may be the most appropriate decision under certain existing circumstances. This section should also address the agency’s policy regarding such potentially high-risk tactics as operating the wrong way on one-way streets or highway entrance ramps, paralleling a pursuit on another street, and of course, the emergency vehicle exemptions allowed and obligations imposed by the vehicle code of the particular jurisdiction.
5. **Pursuit Tactics:** The important factor in this section is to clearly explain the parameters for employing any tactic designed to stop the movement of the suspect vehicle. Permissible tactics should be defined up front. Likewise, impermissible tactics should be identified and specifically prohibited. This section is crucial because of the need to coordinate certain tactics (such as roadblocks, tire deflating spikes and ramming) with department policy on use of force. Identification of permissible tactics is also important from the standpoint of identifying necessary training for officers who will engage in pursuits.
6. **Supervisory Responsibilities:** Whenever possible, a supervisor should have responsibility for the vehicle pursuit. Supervisors should be involved to the degree that they can control the pursuit or terminate it, if necessary. Likewise, the supervisor must bear ultimate field

responsibility for decisions to use extraordinary measures such as roadblocks. In the event that no supervisor is available, the ultimate responsibility of the vehicle pursuit rests with the officer.

7. **Communication Responsibilities:** Communication between pursuing units, dispatch and supervisor should be pre-established. This section ideally would define initial and secondary pursuing units responsibility for communication and the roles to be played by central or regional dispatch and air support units where available. The section should correspond with the agency's policy on radio communications.
8. **Interjurisdictional Pursuits:** Foremost must be the admonition that the agency's officers are required at all times to comply with their own policy regarding pursuit operations, even when going into the territorial jurisdiction of another department or when dispatch changes hands. Likewise, when providing assistance to another agency entering their jurisdiction, officers should only use tactics which are permitted by their own agency, irrespective of what is requested by the other agency. This section should indicate that officers should never engage in a pursuit unless specifically requested to do so. It is recommended that the number of vehicles involved should not exceed two, except in extraordinary circumstances.
9. **Apprehension/Post-Pursuit Responsibility:** Although sometimes covered in a separate agency policy on "arrest" or "apprehension," it is recommended that a pursuit policy have its own section to address this topic. The section should address who is to effect the arrest of the suspect. The end of a pursuit should not resemble a convention of law enforcement vehicles. Likewise, it should not result in the use of excessive force by officers who may be affected by the "adrenaline rush" that may accompany a lengthy pursuit. Affirmation of this section should be part of the controlling supervisor's responsibility. In the event that no supervisor is available, a senior officer may be designated to control the scene and maintain professionalism. This section is especially important where crimes have occurred in multiple jurisdictions in the course of the pursuit.
10. **Pursuit After-Action Report:** This section is mandatory from a liability and risk management standpoint. Proactive supervisors and managers must know where deficiencies occur, in order to better protect the public and their officers. After-action reports should be completed within a short period of time after the pursuit is terminated. The reports should be reviewed by a Pursuit Review Board composed of officers not involved in the pursuit and even, arguably in some jurisdictions, citizens. Recommendations of the Pursuit Review Board should be used to refine and improve policy and be used as the basis for administrative discipline where necessary. This section also provides for the gathering of valuable information that can be used to enhance policy and training programs.
11. **Discipline:** This section should put officers on notice that violation of agency policy on pursuit activities will result in administrative discipline irrespective of whether property damage or

personal injury has resulted. Adherence to this provision is mandatory if the agency wishes to protect itself against liability lawsuits premised upon allegations of “custom” or “practice” of unconstitutional acts under City of Canton v. Harris.

12. **Training:** This section must require that officers successfully complete an agency sponsored vehicle pursuit training session that specifically covers the department’s pursuit policy. It should also require at least annual updates on both the state statutes and case law affecting policy pursuit operations. Officers who have not attended a course that explains the department’s vehicle pursuit policy should not be allowed to engage in a pursuit.
13. **Statutory Reference:** Either by reference within the language of the policy, or by direct reproduction of the statute itself, every policy must acquaint the agency officers with the controlling state emergency vehicle law. Where the statute is inserted in the policy should remain the prerogative of the agency.

General Considerations for Pursuit Operations

Law enforcement agencies need to make themselves aware of, evaluate and – to the extent practicable – use emerging technology to provide for the safe termination of vehicular pursuits.

Agencies should promote the development of common radio frequencies to facilitate the real-time transfer and control of information between agencies as pursuits pass through local jurisdictions. They should agree ahead of time on the responsibility of each agency as a pursuit passes from one jurisdiction into another.

Where aircraft support is available, it should be used immediately to minimize the risks inherent with close pursuit.

Each law enforcement agency should provide for the collection and periodic analysis of risk data on pursuits and causal factors for any law enforcement vehicle crash. This analysis need not be complicated, but should be designed to assist in identifying training, procedural or disciplinary needs, and should be communicated to appropriate agency personnel.

Each law enforcement agency, either in its use-of-force policy or in its pursuit policy, should stress the importance of proper officer conduct and compliance with its use-of-force policy and constitutional requirements once a pursued vehicle has been stopped. Where practicable, primary pursuing officers should take a secondary role in the arrest of the violator.

Conclusion

This Guide proposes that training and policy should be both flexible and adaptive to the unique characteristics, needs, and requirements of each jurisdiction. Clearly, policy comes first. Law enforcement executives are advised to refer to all relevant federal, state and municipal statutes, ordinances and regulations, judicial and administrative decisions to ensure that any policy they draft meets the unique needs of their agency and jurisdiction. It is often helpful to survey other agencies, including national accrediting agencies such as CALEA, and obtain copies of their policies for further guidance during the drafting process.

Training must be informed by policy on a broad range of subjects to include the thirteen components of policy suggested above and especially agency policy on the use of force as it relates to emergency vehicle operation. The process does not end at training, however. The effectiveness of both training and policy should be evaluated regularly by a post incident review process. Periodic review should be conducted on all types of vehicle operation issues including all crashes, emergency responses, and especially pursuits.

The review should inform policy and training. Based upon periodic review it may become necessary to amend policy or to reinforce existing policy. As these decisions then become the determinants of further changes in training, the cycle begins anew.

This Guide recommends a process, not a specific program. Agencies are encouraged to adapt the process, as well as the IACP Sample Policy that follows, to their own environment.

IACP PURSUIT RESOLUTION

(approved at the 103rd. Annual IACP Conference
in Phoenix, Arizona, 10/30/96)

WHEREAS, police pursuits have become an increased focus of attention for public safety officials, the news media and the public at large, and

WHEREAS, an acceptable balance must be obtained between the capture of fleeing suspects and the responsibility of law enforcement to protect the general public from unnecessary risks; and

WHEREAS, there are no uniform reporting criteria or systems in place to accurately account for all pursuits; and

WHEREAS, many agencies have excellent, comprehensive policies in place while others have minimal or no policies at all dealing with pursuits, and

WHEREAS, some states have enacted serious penalties for consciously attempting to elude the police while others have not; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to develop a generic sample policy that can serve as a guide minimum guideline for all agencies involved with pursuits; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), duly assembled at its 103rd. annual conference in Phoenix, Arizona, encourages all agencies to adopt written policies governing pursuits, and that these policies contain at a minimum all the elements put forth in the IACP sample policy and that all members of the agency receive familiarization training in the policy; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the IACP and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) develop a uniform pursuit reporting criteria and form to accurately document pursuit involvements and results nationwide; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the IACP and NHTSA encourage the state legislatures to make it a criminal offense with severe punishments to evade arrest by intentionally failing to comply with the lawful order of a police officer to stop a motor vehicle; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the IACP, NHTSA and the American Association of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers work together to apply technology that will disable fleeing vehicles and minimize the need for pursuits, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the IACP adopt the sample policy developed by its Highway Safety Committee and make it a part of the Manual of Model Police Traffic Services and Procedures

maintained by the Highway Safety Committee, and that this policy replace and rescind all prior IACP policies on this subject.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE

SAMPLE VEHICULAR PURSUIT POLICY

Effective Date: October 30, 1996

Subject: Vehicular Pursuit

CALEA Standard Ref: 41.2.2, 61.3.4

Reevaluation Date: October 30, 1999

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for making decisions with regard to vehicular pursuit.

II. POLICY:

Vehicular pursuit of fleeing suspects can present a danger to the lives of the public, officers, and suspects involved in the pursuit. It is the responsibility of the agency to assist officers in the safe performance of their duties. To fulfill these obligations, it shall be the policy of this law enforcement agency to regulate the manner in which vehicular pursuits are undertaken and performed.

III. DEFINITIONS:

- A. Vehicular Pursuit: An active attempt by an officer in an authorized emergency vehicle to apprehend a fleeing suspect who is actively attempting to elude the police.
- B. Authorized emergency vehicle: A vehicle of this agency equipped with operable emergency equipment as designated by state law.
- C. Primary unit: The police unit which initiates a pursuit or any unit which assumes control of the pursuit.
- D. Secondary unit: Any police vehicle which becomes involved as a backup to the primary unit and follows the primary unit at a safe distance.

IV. PROCEDURES:

A. Initiation of pursuit:

1. The decision to initiate pursuit must be based on the pursuing officer's conclusion that the immediate danger to the officer and the public created by the pursuit is less than the immediate or potential danger to the public should the suspect remain at large.
2. Any law enforcement officer in an authorized emergency vehicle may initiate a vehicular pursuit when the suspect exhibits the intention to avoid apprehension by refusing to stop when properly directed to do so. Pursuit may also be justified if the officer reasonably believes that the suspect, if allowed to flee, would present a danger to human life or cause serious injury.
3. In deciding whether to initiate pursuit, the officer shall take into consideration:
 - a. road, weather and environmental conditions;
 - b. population density and vehicular and pedestrian traffic;
 - c. the relative performance capabilities of the pursuit vehicle and the vehicle being pursued;
 - d. the seriousness of the offense; and
 - e. the presence of other persons in the police vehicle.

B. Pursuit Operations:

1. All emergency vehicle operations shall be conducted in strict conformity with applicable traffic laws and regulations.
2. Upon engaging in a pursuit, the pursuing vehicle shall activate appropriate warning equipment.
3. Upon engaging in pursuit, the officer shall notify communications of the location, direction and speed of the pursuit, the description of the pursued vehicle and the initial purpose of the stop. The officer shall keep communications updated on the pursuit. Communications personnel shall notify any available supervisor of the pursuit, clear the radio channel of non-

emergency traffic, and relay necessary information to other officers and jurisdictions.

4. When engaged in pursuit, officers shall not drive with reckless disregard for the safety of other road users.
5. Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, a pursuit shall consist of no more than two police vehicles, a primary and a secondary unit. All other personnel shall stay clear of the pursuit unless instructed to participate by a supervisor.
6. The primary pursuit unit shall become secondary when the fleeing vehicle comes under air surveillance or when another unit has been assigned primary responsibility.

C. Supervisory Responsibilities:

1. When made aware of a vehicular pursuit, the appropriate supervisor shall monitor incoming information, coordinate and direct activities as needed to ensure that proper procedures are used, and shall have the discretion to terminate the pursuit.
2. Where possible, a supervisory officer shall respond to the location where a vehicle has been stopped following a pursuit.

D. Pursuit Tactics:

1. Officers shall not normally follow the pursuit on parallel streets unless authorized by a supervisor or when it is possible to conduct such an operation without unreasonable hazard to other vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
2. When feasible, available patrol units having the most prominent markings and emergency lights shall be used to pursue, particularly as the primary unit. When a pursuit is initiated by other than a marked patrol unit, such unit shall disengage when a marked unit becomes available.
3. Motorcycles may be used for pursuit in exigent circumstances and when weather and related conditions allow. They shall disengage when support from marked patrol units becomes available.

4. All intervention tactics short of deadly force such as spike strips, low speed tactical intervention techniques, and low speed channeling (with appropriate advance warning) should be used when it is possible to do so in safety and when the officers utilizing them have received appropriate training in their use.
5. Decisions to discharge firearms at or from a moving vehicle, or to use roadblocks, shall be governed by this agency's use of force policy, and are prohibited if they present an unreasonable risk to others. They should first be authorized, whenever possible, by a supervisor.
6. Once the pursued vehicle is stopped, officers shall utilize appropriate officer safety tactics and shall be aware of the necessity to utilize only reasonable and necessary force to take suspects into custody.

E. Termination of the Pursuit:

1. The primary pursuing unit shall continually re-evaluate and assess the pursuit situation including all of the initiating factors and terminate the pursuit whenever he or she reasonably believes the risks associated with continued pursuit are greater than the public safety benefit of making an immediate apprehension.
2. The pursuit may be terminated by the primary pursuit unit at any time.
3. A supervisor may order the termination of a pursuit at any time.
4. A pursuit may be terminated if the suspect's identity has been determined, immediate apprehension is not necessary to protect the public or officers, and apprehension at a later time is feasible.

F. Inter-jurisdictional Pursuits:

1. The pursuing officer shall notify communications when it is likely that a pursuit will continue into a neighboring jurisdiction or across the county or state line.
2. Pursuit into a bordering state shall conform with the law of both states and any applicable inter-jurisdictional agreements.

3. When a pursuit enters this jurisdiction, the action of officers shall be governed by the policy of the officers' own agency, specific inter-local agreements and state law as applicable.

G. After-Action Reporting:

1. Whenever an officer engages in a pursuit, the officer shall file a written report on the appropriate form detailing the circumstances. This report shall be critiqued by the appropriate supervisor or supervisors to determine if policy has been complied with and to detect and correct any training deficiencies.
2. The department shall periodically analyze police pursuit activity and identify any additions, deletions or modifications warranted in departmental pursuit procedures.

H. Training:

Officers who drive police vehicles shall be given initial and periodic update training in the agency's pursuit policy and in safe driving tactics.

NOTE: This sample policy is intended to serve as a guide for the police executive who is interested in formulating a written procedure to govern vehicular pursuit. IACP recognizes that staffing, equipment, legal, and geographical considerations and contemporary community standards vary greatly among jurisdictions, and that no single policy will be appropriate for every jurisdiction. We have, however, attempted to outline the most critical factors that should be present in every pursuit policy, including the need for training, guidelines for initiating and terminating pursuits, the regulation of pursuit tactics, supervisory review or intervention, and reporting and critique of all pursuits.

Approved at the 103rd. IACP Annual Conference,

Phoenix, Arizona, October 30, 1996

Emergency Vehicle Driving and Policy

Regulation of Training Programs

- Development and approval of the training program
- Periodic review and updating curriculum
- Training and approval of instructors
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- Simulation technology
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- Safety equipment and course modifications
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Agency Vehicle Operation Policies

Policies Regulating Routine Driving

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Agency Vehicle Operation Policies

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Agency Vehicle Operation Policies

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Developing Defensible Pursuit Policies

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